

From: Jason Giglio
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/23/02 8:22am
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

Dear Sirs,

As a worker in the computer field, I am in daily contact with many computer software products. Computers continually amaze me at what they are capable of doing. I am lucky, though; I am savvy enough to be able to seek out alternatives to Microsoft products.

There are millions of other people who use computers, but who are not savvy enough to install their own Operating Systems. Those people just use what comes on the computer, and don't see the other options. This is a direct result of Microsoft abusing their monopoly power in pressuring OEMs to give them exclusive deals, and pressuring OEMs to exclude any other options on the desktop.

This, however, is just the tip of the iceberg. I am continually confronted with minor ways that MS abuses their monopoly power, ways that less computer savvy people never notice.

One example is the Starband Internet service. Microsoft is a large investor in Starband, and the influence shows. It is impossible to use an operating system other than MS Windows on a computer attached to a Starband satellite Internet system. Advocates of alternate operating systems have asked for the specifications to allow a driver to be written for other operating systems, but Starband has refused.

Another example is the MSN Internet service. It can be used on non-Windows platforms, but one cannot send and receive email, due to Microsoft using a proprietary standard for email on their service that only works with Microsoft Outlook. Microsoft also blocks the running of one's own mail server, which would allow one to avoid using the Microsoft servers with their incompatible protocol.

Yet another example is the Microsoft File and Print Sharing protocol. A program has been developed for Linux/UNIX operating systems named Samba. Microsoft has consistently changed subtle parts of their file sharing protocol, in attempts to break any programs that attempt to interoperate with Windows on a non-Windows platform.

We must not allow this monopoly to continue abusing their position of power. An easy settlement of the case, with a mere slap on the wrist of Microsoft, is not enough.

The Proposed Final Judgement fails to address these issues of deliberate incompatibility, it would do nothing to address the important issues that I face every day as a person who has to attempt to design systems to interoperate with Microsoft Systems.

The Proposed Final Judgment as written allows and encourages significant anticompetitive practices to continue, would delay the emergence of competing Windows-compatible operating systems, and is therefore not in the public interest. It should not be adopted without substantial revision to address these problems.

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